

their dependents in presenting claims to the Veterans' Administration, perpetuate the memory of those who died during war, teach lessons of patriotism and love of country, and inspire respect for the flag in the youth of America.

The Gold Star Mothers of El Paso remind us of the never-ending bond between families. They remind us of the sacrifice that families of veterans make as they endure the fears and concerns of having loved ones overseas, and the loss from loved ones who never return.

As Veterans Day memorials take place this week throughout the nation, the Jefferson High School commemoration is a special event honoring the incredible sacrifice and service of one community. The twelve Vietnam Veteran classmates of 1967, are part of a larger number of Jefferson High School veterans who served and risked their lives for American values and ideals. These men and women reflect an El Paso community which maintains a long history of distinguished military service with the presence of Fort Bliss. Our community of veterans includes those from World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf and other conflicts where American troops have stood against totalitarianism and threats to our national security.

The Jefferson High School ceremony also reminds us of our young men and women who are currently deployed around the world. These fine soldiers are our nation's first line of defense and they protect our interests and allies whether they are in Bosnia, the Middle East, Korea, or Europe. The incredible freedom we enjoy in these times of prosperity is a direct consequence of the service of these brave men and women and the veterans who preceded them throughout this century. We should be grateful for their commitment and dedication and never take for granted the high price they and their families pay to defend our liberty.

On this the fiftieth anniversary of Jefferson High School, let us remember the duty, honor, and sacrifice made by the graduates of this school, by their families, and the community that supports and honors them.

Veterans Day asks all Americans to take stock in this nation's incredible opportunities and freedoms, and urges us to always remember our courageous veterans.

God bless these veterans and their families.

CONGRATULATING ERIC LEWIS

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 10, 1999

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Eric Lewis from Camden, New Jersey on winning the prestigious Thelonious Monk International Jazz Piano Competition. As a Camden native, Mr. Lewis has brought great pride both to the city of Camden and to the entire state of New Jersey, as well as to musicians all over world. In addition to his exceptional musical talents, Mr. Lewis obviously shares a commitment to his community. Mr. Lewis has pledged to donate ten percent of his winnings to his local church. This unselfishness and generosity is a testament to Mr. Lewis' character and an ex-

ample to all. I have confidence that he will use his exceptional talent to give back to his neighbors and community. Once again, hats off to Mr. Eric Lewis on this outstanding accomplishment.

PARENTS HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT TOXIC RISKS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S HEALTH

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 10, 1999

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will help protect our children from illness and disease that can result from chemical exposure to pesticides. My legislation, the School Environment Protection (SEPA) Act, addresses the need for schools to provide protective action from the effects of pesticide use in school buildings and on school grounds.

Parents entrust their children's safety to schools and have the right to know what toxic substances their children are being exposed to. There are safe alternatives to the use of dangerous chemicals as pesticides and herbicides. This bill would encourage schools to use integrated pest management techniques that have proven to be safe and effective. In the event that potentially dangerous chemicals would have to be used, this Right to Know Act will require our schools to inform parents of any risk to which their children would be exposed. My proposal will take simple steps to ensure children's safety in the place where they spend most of their time, school.

When it comes to pesticide exposure, children are one of the least protected groups. Due to their small size, children take in more pesticides relative to their body weight than adults and are also less likely to detoxify toxic chemicals through their still developing organ systems.

The National Academy of Sciences Report, Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children, found that the current EPA generally lacks data on children's susceptibility to pesticide exposure that would allow them to provide adequate standards necessary to protect children. The EPA is beginning the process to review pesticides, however, this could take them months or even years. Meanwhile, schools are frequently using pesticides that have the potential to harm our children's physical and mental development. Maryland schools reported 94% of their school districts surveyed used pesticides that have been linked to cancer. Similar results were yielded in California with 93% of its school districts surveyed using pesticides known for causing cancer. This usage can be a serious detriment to our children's health. We do not have time to wait for the EPA's results. According to the National Cancer Institute, childhood cancer has increased over 1 percent a year. Too many of our children's health and lives are at risk now and in the future.

Studies have shown that children living in households where pesticides are used suffered elevated rates of soft tissue sarcoma, leukemia and brain cancer. A study done by Childhood Leukemia and Parents' Occupational and Home Exposures found that in homes where pesticides were used a 3.8-fold

higher risk of childhood leukemia was likely and when pesticides were used in the garden a 6.5-fold higher risk was reported.

Some states have taken action to combat this ever-growing problem, however state protection is uneven and children in 20 states have no protection at all from these potentially deadly chemicals.

My SEPA legislation will require the use of the safest pesticides in and around our schools. All pesticides that have been determined to cause cancer, mutations, neurological and immune system effects and other serious toxic effects will be excluded from use in schools. Schools may use conventional pesticides if less toxic substances cannot control or prevent a pest as long as the school community is given at least 24 hours notice of application.

Several national and regional groups have already come out in support of my bill. This includes the National Education Association, Children's Health Environment Coalition, Citizens for a Better Environment, New Jersey Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides and the New Jersey Environmental Federation.

SEPA will force our nation to better protect all our children from unnecessary chemical effects and assist our youth in living healthier, longer lives. I urge all my colleagues to join in this "Right to Know" effort by supporting the School Environmental Protection Act.

RELIEF FOR AKAL SECURITY

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 10, 1999

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce a bill that would allow a business, Akal Security, located in Santa Cruz, New Mexico, to receive payment for services it performed for the United States Government almost a decade ago.

In the Spring of 1991, Akal Security performed guard services as emergency work during the Desert Storm situation. Specifically, security services were performed at a record storage site located in St. Louis, Missouri. The storage site was leased to the Army Corps of Engineers and was further leased to the Army Reserve Personnel Center (ARPERCEN). The services were orally ordered by the United States Corps of Engineers for the month of March, 1991.

On April 3, 1991, Akal submitted its invoice for \$10,208.74 for services performed. After multiple requests, the Department of the Army has still not paid the bill owed. To date, there has never been any question that the services were in fact ordered by the COE and rendered by Akal Security.

In December, 1992, the Deputy General Counsel of the Department of the Army notified Akal Security that the guard services could not be procured because it could cause a violation of 10 U.S.C. Sec 2465. This section provides that the "Department of Defense may not be obligated—for the purpose of entering into a contract for the performance of—security-guard functions at any military installation or facility." The only recommendation of the Deputy General Counsel was that Akal could seek private relief legislation.

Mr. Speaker, correspondence from a Colonel Greiling in 1995 indicates that the Army